

## REGULAR PAPER

WILEY



# “GET SMALLER”? Emerging geographies of micro-living

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Research Councils UK (Economic and Social Research Council)

Cities across the world are in the grip of an intensifying housing crisis, in which access to affordable, secure, and appropriate housing is increasingly inaccessible for the majority. There is rising pressure on stakeholders to find solutions but, simultaneously, persistent opposition to housing models that contest the neoliberal logics which prioritise housing's financialisation. In this context, many proposed and developed “solutions” have focused on how housing can – in the words of one entry to an architectural competition – “GET SMALLER.” Termed “micro-living,” a trend is emerging for housing models that shrink living spaces, either by providing self-contained units at below minimum space standards or by offering “co-living” tenancies in small private rooms with access to shared communal spaces. Presented as innovative and aspirational, micro-living distinguishes itself from unequivocally problematic small housing, such as Hong Kong's “coffin homes” or the UK's “beds-in-sheds.” While micro-living is transforming ways of imagining, producing, and inhabiting cities, it has, as yet, been little explored by geographers. Responding to this gap, this paper traces the emerging geographies of micro-living in major Western cities and demonstrates the importance of the topic in Geography. As well as detailing micro-living's typologies, we excavate the lineages of micro-living and consider the discourses it draws on in self-presenting as an aspirational form of homemaking. In doing so, we highlight some of the issues that micro-living responds to, exacerbates, and entrenches, including the stunted opportunities of millennials since the 2008 recession and the precarity of contemporary labour economies.

**KEYWORDS**

co-living, housing crisis, micro-living, precarity

## 1 | INTRODUCTION

In 2015, New London Architecture (NLA) – a UK-based research forum – ran a competition looking for ways to alleviate the housing crisis. It was met with manifold suggestions of ways that housing can, in the words of one entry, “GET SMALLER!” The competition exposed the explosion of interest and investment in what has been termed “micro-living”; living spaces that don't conform to current minimum space standards. The British Property Federation (2018) has defined three kinds of micro-living: “self-contained living spaces,” purpose built co-living developments, and converted and subdivided shared living spaces. Micro-living is rapidly growing and now a feature of housing economies in cities including London, New York, Buenos Aires, Hong Kong, Dublin, Paris, Perth, and Vancouver, where unaffordable housing has

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become a chronic issue in the post-2008 era. There have been many proclamations of micro-living as the new “big thing” from journalists, urbanists, and housing market specialists (Barhat, 2015; Donati, 2019; Post, 2014).

The rise of micro-living is pertinent to consider in relation to geographies of home. Increasingly, geographers have considered the political potency of home. Long under-theorised as an apolitical site of comfort and familiarity, in recent years the political implications of home have been more thoroughly conceptualised. For example, scholars have elucidated how the home can reinforce expectations of gender roles, and provide a conduit for gendered violence and oppression (Brickell, 2012). This politicisation has also been considered through processes that moralise particular forms of homemaking as ideal, and concurrently those who do not prescribe to these ideals as undeserving of home. For example, punitive measures against social housing tenants, such as the UK's bedroom tax, a policy that reduces tenant access to housing benefits if they are deemed to have one or more spare bedroom, actively punishes those deemed non-compliant with neoliberal models of homeownership-as-ideal (Nowicki, 2018). And in many parts of Europe, stricter anti-squatting laws derail the opportunity to establish alternative forms of homemaking (Nowicki, 2017; Vasudevan, 2017). The promotion of micro-living by stakeholders and the media is an important intervention in such narratives of what constitutes ideal homemaking, and yet micro-living's aspirational branding has received little academic attention. Most literature on micro-homes and the related Tiny House movement has, so far, positioned micro-living within debates on sustainability and degrowth (e.g., Anson, 2014; Nelson & Schneider, 2019). Less attention has been paid to aspirational discourses around micro-living and their stakes and implications. As we will show,<sup>1</sup> micro-living reflects a reworking of what constitutes ideal homes. It does so through shrinking expectations, and co-opting anti-capitalist collective housing models to fit post-austerity neoliberal models seeking the highest profit at the cost of secure, suitable homes.

We trace and contextualise micro-living as a contemporary phenomenon. Rather than an empirically driven account, the paper provides a critical review of emerging narratives of micro-living as aspirational, and the implications for housing policy and future geographical research. We begin by detailing micro-living's typologies. Second, we excavate micro-living's lineages. Third, we consider the discourses it draws on in its branding as an aspirational form of homemaking – discourses that also offer insight into the issues micro-living responds to, exacerbates, and entrenches. Lastly, we consider micro-living's implications and argue for its importance as a focus for geographical research.

## 2 | MICRO-LIVING: TYPOLOGIES, CONTEXTS

Properties labelled by stakeholders as micro-living include self-contained units below minimum space standards and small private rooms in buildings with shared spaces, including purpose-designed co-living sites and subdivided properties. Minimum space standards vary, but in cities like London and New York City are around 37 m<sup>2</sup> for one person in a one-bedroom property (Bernard, 2018; Department for Communities & Local Government, 2015). Comparatively, micro-living spaces range from just below these standards, for example New York's first micro-unit development Carmel Place has apartments up to 33.5 m<sup>2</sup>, down to properties as small as Haibu's 2.4 m<sup>2</sup> developments in Paris and Barcelona.

Houses of multiple occupation (HMOs), properties rented out by at least three people not part of the same household (i.e., house shares), have become mainstream within private rental economies as millennials, dubbed “Generation Rent,” increasingly share with peers due to prohibitive costs of renting or buying alone (Hoolachan et al., 2017). While not normally branded “micro-living,” HMOs usually offer residents private bedrooms, along with shared access to kitchens, bathrooms, and sometimes living rooms and gardens. These are rented through agencies or arranged through peer-to-peer platforms like Gumtree, Spareroom, or Craigslist. Purpose-designed co-living spaces, a more recent phenomenon, provide dormitory-style accommodation for adults with shared spaces and amenities including kitchens, co-working spaces, gyms, laundry facilities, gardens, and sometimes entertainment areas. These include “Tribe Co-Living” in the USA and Nomad Hub in Buenos Aires. Co-living rents often exceed other private rents in similar areas. For example, The Collective in Willesden, London charges £1,083 per month for an en-suite room, and £1,300 for a studio (The Collective, 2019). In the same locale, the cost of a room in a house share is £500–£750 per month, and renting a studio flat around £800 (Rightmove, 2019). Node Living in Bushwick, New York offers studios for US\$2,775 per month (Node Living, 2019), compared to around US\$1,800 per month in the same area for a one-bedroom apartment (Zillow, 2019). Despite its often high cost, micro-living has wide appeal, deemed preferable by many to the flat shares or substandard apartments they could otherwise afford.

Self-contained micro-living spaces are harder to gain planning permission for, given that minimum space standards persist. However, in New York, Carmel Place was “granted several mayoral overrides ... including the relaxation of the minimum unit size,” allowing it to become a prototype for micro-housing (nArchitects, 2019, n.p.). In London, the company U + I have built prototypes of 18 m<sup>2</sup> “Town Flats,” with the expectation that space standards will soon be relaxed. Indeed,

in 2019, the Adam Smith Institute called for UK space standards to be scrapped to enable micro-living to become a significant part of London's housing economy (Kichanova, 2019). These typologies highlight the varying yet connected ways that domestic space is shrinking. In the case of micro-housing, this is through the reduction of minimum space standards, while co-living models reduce private living space by placing greater emphasis on communal areas.

These forms of housing are not entirely new. However, micro-living terminology is, and signals a set of new imaginaries around small living spaces that, we argue, act to normalise and naturalise housing crisis conditions. A decade on from the 2008 financial crash, access to affordable, appropriate housing has become unattainable for many (Madden & Marcuse, 2016). There have been rises in family homelessness (Grant et al., 2013) and vast increases in adults living in shared accommodation or with parents until their 30s or 40s (Bentley & McCallum, 2019). These issues are acute in major global cities, where house prices and costs of living are higher, and socio-economic inequalities greater. In this climate, developers position micro-living as an innovative “solution,” even though it does little to fix access to appropriate housing. In fact, tenants often pay a premium for accommodation branded as micro-living, which is priced above other equivalently sized properties.

Micro-living sits within a broader field of “compensatory” (Harris, 2019) homemaking to have emerged in the post-2008 context. Distinct from housing forms that are unequivocally problematic, like Hong Kong's “coffin homes” or the UK's “beds in sheds,”<sup>2</sup> compensatory housing cultures can be understood as reductions in standards that are not recognised as such but instead branded, and often experienced as, aspirational (Harris, 2019). This trend includes the rise of property guardianship schemes (Ferreri et al., 2017), renting or buying in “blue space” (boats on waterways), and the promotion, in the UK's social housing sector, of “pop-up” accommodation (Harris et al., 2019).

Property guardianship is an alternative to private renting (Ferreri & Dawson, 2017; Ferreri et al., 2017). Individuals pay to live in vacant buildings while also performing security services for companies, protecting buildings from squatting and vandalism. They are often derelict commercial properties with limited access to amenities, including heating or water. Guardians are not legally classed as tenants, and have little contractual security, with some given only 48 hours to vacate. However, property guardianship has been promoted by the companies who facilitate it, and is narrated by property guardians themselves, as “adventurous” and “flexible” – in that it involves living in unusual locations. It is also generally cheaper than renting a “normal” property. Its relative affordability and branding as “quirky” and “liberating” (Ferreri & Dawson, 2017, p. 432) renders property guardianship appealing to (especially young) people in high-cost cities despite their frequent inappropriateness as housing.

Buying or renting houseboats has become another of the few affordable types of accommodation in major cities with waterways (Knight, 2010; Shepherd, 2016). London's canals are becoming overcrowded because many millennials are electing to buy houseboats so that they can stay within (relatively) central areas (Shepherd, 2016; Slawson, 2015). Many “new boaters” don't pay for permanent moorings so have to move every fortnight, making it another example of precarious, labour-intensive housing. Like micro-living, “blue space” is promoted by developers as a housing crisis solution: “Generation Float” an alternative to “Generation Rent” (NLA, 2015). Again, rather than being acknowledged as a consequence of crisis, proposals for extending bluespace accommodation are deemed “eye-catchingly radical,” “ambitious” ideas (NLA, 2015, p. 5).

Compensatory housing also includes “innovations” in the social sector. Elsewhere we have explored examples from the emerging UK trend of “pop-up housing”: temporary and mobile accommodation offered to homeless families by local governments (Harris et al., 2019). At a time when physical and political infrastructures for permanent social housing are being dismantled, pop-up temporary housing is a measure which, while helping a limited number of families, cannot solve the crisis in social housing provision. Indeed, as we've argued elsewhere (*ibid*), the promotion of pop-up housing by local and central government instead entrenches the crisis, normalising the idea that access to social housing should only ever be temporary. Nevertheless, like other compensatory housing, pop-up accommodation is branded by UK governments and received by the media as an innovative “solution” (Boff, 2016). Positioning micro-living within this context demonstrates its pertinence for geographical research. It demands attention not just because of its own rapid rise as a form of urban accommodation but because of its centrality within a trend of new housing typologies that respond to the crisis by rebranding diminished housing opportunities as aspirational and, in doing so, rework conceptions of what constitutes an adequate home.

### 3 | LINEAGES OF MICRO-LIVING

Our argument here is not that micro-living is a new concept. Rather, the micro-living trend can be traced to long-standing traditions of living in small or shared spaces. What *is* new is how micro-living repackages these traditions. Micro-living

developers co-opt anti-capitalist reimaginings of home, like eco-living and co-housing, repositioning them through commercialised lenses. They also rebrand the subdivision of housing into micro-spaces that has long existed, positioning this as desirable rather than a consequence of poor planning regulations and high housing costs.

One key inspiration for micro-living is the USA's well-established Tiny Homes movement (Anson, 2014; Evans, 2018; Ford & Gomez-Lanier, 2017). Tiny Homes are another trend for small living spaces. They “occupy a gray area between trailer/mobile home/recreational vehicle and a house,” often on wheels in order to sidestep regulations applied to permanent residences (Ford & Gomez-Lanier, 2017, p. 400). Like micro-living, Tiny Homes are narrativised in journalism and social media as fulfilling desires for minimalism and decluttering (Ford & Gomez-Lanier, 2017), while also responding to issues of affordability. The Tiny Homes movement is, however, distinct from micro-living in its positioning as a rural housing typology. Connected to traditions of simple, rural living via affiliation with Thoreau's depiction of such lifestyles in the 19th-century novel *Walden* (Anson, 2014), Tiny Homes are promoted by stakeholders as reducing environmental footprint and simplifying lifestyles, removed from the stresses of urban environments. Micro-living, meanwhile, is presented as a way people can remain in central urban locations despite rising house prices.

Co-living, a subset of micro-living, also derives from alternative housing movements. The co-living desire to “live-in-common” is traditionally rooted in the production and defence of anti-capitalist commons (Chatterton, 2016; Kamola & Meyerhoff, 2009). Traditional co-housing communities seek to work outside top-down models of housing development, focusing on ensuring residents themselves are the lead decision-makers regarding their housing and communities. Models of communal living like Israel's kibbutzim and Copenhagen's Christiania Freetown are largely built on socialist ideologies of non-hierarchical communal living (Jarvis, 2013). In cities like London and Berlin, communal modes of living, whereby housing is mutually owned, managed, and maintained in usually not-for-profit models by residents, has origins in squatting movements of the 1960s and 70s (Vasudevan, 2017). For example, many housing co-operatives today originate from squats formed as a direct response to the high levels of local authority property left in vacant disrepair in the wake of war damage and the 1970s recession. Former squatting communities, like Brixton Housing Co-operative in South London, that occupied these abandoned spaces often negotiated with local authorities to establish legal ownership or tenancy rights in exchange for bringing properties back into use. Like property guardianship schemes, communal living has been adapted and re-defined by contemporary co-living developers, selling the principles of urban commons and the reuse of abandoned space through a distinctly capitalist lens. Rather than providing alternatives to capitalist modes of living, co-living developers like The Collective (2019) and Node Living (2019) emphasise the benefits of co-living for efficient labour practices through the inclusion of workspaces and the promise that their schemes provide meeting points for entrepreneurs and creative economy professionals to network.

Another important context that micro-living narratives derive from and co-opt are the housing landscapes of major Asian cities. Micro-living is long-standing in cities such as Hong Kong, Tokyo, and Singapore. A consequence of limited buildable land in mountainous nations, high costs of housing and land, and limited planning regulation in relation to space standards, high-density living is the norm in many East Asian cities. Indeed, Kowloon Walled City, a largely informal settlement in Hong Kong, was until its demolition the most densely populated place on earth, with 33,000 people inhabiting just two hectares of land. More recently, the city's “coffin homes” have been widely reported in international media, with approximately 200,000 poor people living in units subdivided to the point where some inhabitants can't stretch out their legs (Taylor, 2017). Such forms of micro-living have largely been understood by academics and urbanists as reflective of housing insecurity. Indeed, research in environmental psychology has highlighted the negative impacts reduced living space can have on mental health, wellbeing, and concentration, particularly for children (Evans et al., 2001). And yet, alongside exposés of these appalling conditions, developers and policymakers in Western cities are increasingly narrativising examples of extreme micro-living in East Asian cities as innovative. For example, homes as small as 10 m<sup>2</sup> in Tokyo have been praised by architects as ingenious solutions to housing crises (Michler, 2018). In Hong Kong, 18 m<sup>2</sup> water pipes are being developed into “nano-apartments”: marketed as chic solutions to high-cost housing (James Law Cybertecture, n.d.). Increasingly, what has traditionally been understood as problematic housing borne as a consequence of limited options is being reframed by micro-living proponents as an aspirational lifestyle choice.

#### 4 | NARRATIVISING SHRINKING LIVING SPACE: DISCOURSES OF MICRO-LIVING

What distinguishes micro-living from other small living spaces is, then, its branding as aspirational. Austerity is characterised by a “shrinking” of material worlds matched by damage to psychological worlds (Hitchen & Shaw, 2019). Yet in micro-living this shrinking is reimagined as desirable by developers and through media and social media discourses,



including for example content posted with Instagram hashtags of #microliving or #microhome. This reimagination is enacted through the mobilisation of multiple discourses, including environmental justifications, minimalism, and the burden of “stuff,” the promotion of flexible lifestyles, and the idea of the “urban single” as a new demographic category. These discourses feature heavily not only in promotional materials but in how inhabitants represent their homes on social media platforms.

As seen in the Tiny Homes movement, sustainability is a key narrative within micro-living. For example, the creators of “SHED” – a micro-home that slots inside otherwise uninhabitable commercial spaces – describe it as a “revolutionary and environmentally sustainable solution for quality and affordable accommodation,” because it “can be taken down and rebuilt in a different site” and is constructed from “low-impact materials” (The Shed, 2019). In other instances, developers argue micro-living is more sustainable because properties are often built using offsite manufacturing techniques, reducing environmental damage produced by traditional methods. Equally, micro-living arguably reduces emissions from commuting, by enabling people to live centrally in cities, and encouraging lower environmental footprints by limiting heating and electricity use and discouraging ownership of copious possessions. However, it has been argued that the ecological benefits of micro-living in the short-term stages of construction and immediate use do not equate to long-term sustainability, given that micro-living doesn't easily accommodate changes in use or lifestyle (Moodie, 2015).

Despite micro-living's environmental credentials remaining unclear, these discourses continue to be mobilised by housing developers to promote smaller housing during a time of crisis. As Bramall (2013) has discussed in her work on “austerity chic,” narratives around environmental benefits of thrift and reuse have been widely deployed since 2008, used to justify altered consumption practices necessitated by reductions in disposable income. Similarly, concern with environmental sustainability apparent in micro-living is arguably as much, if not more, related to attempts to justify reductions in living space at a time of housing crisis than a primary concern with environmental damage. Furthermore, apparent reductions in consumption encouraged by micro-living are also questionable, given micro-living cultures contain directives to consume products for living in small spaces, e.g., the range of furnishings for micro-homes offered by IKEA.

While supporting certain consumption cultures, micro-living is nevertheless narrativised as a response to an apparent cultural shift away from “stuffification.” For example the futurologist Wallman, hired by a micro-living developer, argues that people feel weighed down by stuff and “instead of looking for happiness and status in material goods” are “finding them in experiences instead” (Wallman, 2017). This claim disregards an economic context whereby many can no longer attain material goods that previously signified status and quality of life (Hakim, 2016). These arguments connect micro-living to the emergence of the sharing economy, suggesting that “one of the reasons why we are less bothered about owning things, is that we can now have all the benefits of access to a good, without the hassle of owning it” (Wallman, 2017). Micro-housing developer U + I state on their website that micro-living responds to “people's increasing desire to have fewer things and take up less space” (U + I, 2019). Equally, the aspirational minimalism of micro-living can be linked to other trends in domestic cultures, like the Marie Kondo technique, which encourages a brutal decluttering of domestic spaces. For example, an image of a home posted by a user on Instagram under the hashtag #microliving is captioned “Friday nights are now spent cleaning/organizing” – positioning the maintenance of a minimalist, small living space as an aspirational activity.

The branding of micro-living spaces by developers as a domestic model connected to the sharing economy also taps into discourses of flexibility and collectivity prevalent across contemporary work cultures in “creative cities” (Mould, 2014). Co-living sites normally include spaces for co-working, targeted at millennial, self-employed, and freelance workers. Co-living developers' promotional materials play into the characterisation of such workers as both enterprising and adventurous and as adaptable and amicable (Gandini, 2015) – willing to take innovative risks independently, but also eager to be part of the temporary communities that form around co-working and living spaces. For example, The Collective market co-working spaces as part of their co-living developments. Their website describes how “Everyone needs stimulation and inspiration, or just to be in the company of others. We know entrepreneurs have unpredictable schedules [...] we make it possible for you to come to our co-working spaces any time, day or night” (The Collective, 2019, n.p.). Co-living matches the logics of co-working, providing shared central space for people otherwise isolated and fragmented. Co-working is a “catch basin for precarious workers” (Gandini, 2015, p. 202) who otherwise find the precarity of freelance positions exacerbated by a lack of geographical rootedness (Ceinar, 2019). Co-living may compensate for the same issue, offering a (temporary) site of community for precarious workers who lack community links usually established via work or permanent residence of neighbourhoods. This is evident in The Collective's promise that their co-working spaces offer a chance to “be in the company of others” while working independently on unpredictable schedules. Yet, while co-living developers promote their spaces as offering community, they are designed for a specific life stage rather than as permanent homes, as such suited to those who are figured as adaptable, flexible urban citizens. This is clear from tenancy options at The

Collective, which range from “memberships” of 1 day to 1 year (The Collective, 2019) and Tribe Co-living, whose average tenancy length is 6 months (Tribe, 2019).

Indeed, micro-living is almost exclusively targeted at young single people. Developers justify micro-living as a response to the rise of the “urban single” as a demographic category. A report commissioned by U + I cites “the growth of the singleton” as a driving factor for micro-living. It argues that millennial adult life is defined by “amortality” – a purported state where longer life expectancies change “our cultural norms about life-stages” leading to people spending more of their lives single and preferring to live alone in cities, focusing on social life and leisure, rather than partnerships and families (Wallman, 2017). The report proposes a new planning designation – PB1A – that builds on the PBSA (Purpose Built Student Accommodation) planning designation for student housing to enable purpose-built micro-accommodation for “singletons.” However, justifying micro-living as a response to “the century of the social singleton” (Wallman, 2017) ignores the duality of this relationship. While housing trends may be responding to the increase in single adults, this is also driven by the housing crisis, which makes it harder for adults to access the housing security needed to start long-term relationships and families. The housing crisis in Britain “represents the biggest single barrier to young people getting on with their lives and taking the traditional steps towards adult status” (Green, 2017, p. 70) and this mirrors experiences of young people across cities in Europe, who live with parents for longer (Cairns, 2011; Lennartz, Arundel, & Ronald, 2015; Minguez, 2016). Micro-living, and especially co-living spaces following the student housing model, do not alleviate the negative impacts of the housing crisis on young adults’ life progressions, instead entrenching the “eternal student” status many find themselves inhabiting. Micro-living developers appeal to people who feel too old for traditional house shares but can’t afford to live independently. Most co-living is for single tenants and assertions that you might meet a “lover” (The Collective, 2019) in communal areas appeal to their imagined desires. Yet while micro-living responds to the increase in single adults in cities due to housing insecurity, it also exacerbates this problem, given that micro-living properties don’t offer the space to start families or conduct long-term relationships easily.

## 5 | CONCLUSIONS

This paper has sketched the emergence of contemporary micro-living typologies, situated micro-living within other “compensatory” homemaking during an era of housing crisis, excavated the lineages of micro-living, and explored discourses mobilised to promote and justify its development. We argue that, rather than a housing crisis solution, micro-living solidifies many of its issues, while simultaneously co-opting and neutralising anti-capitalist housing models. Instead of addressing high housing costs, it normalises reductions in size of living spaces. Likewise, rather than helping young adults to access affordable independent housing, it offers models that naturalise the stunted lifeworlds of the housing crisis, by extending student-style accommodation into adult housing markets. Micro-living also entrenches other crises, including labour precarity, especially within creative industries. It establishes infrastructures for co-living and working which offset the isolation and fragmentation of freelance work but in doing so ingrains these labour cultures. Crucially, we have shown how micro-living reimagines diminished housing conditions as aspirational. While we have explored how developers of and advocates for micro-living do this, it is also important to consider how micro-living residents self-promote their housing via social media as well as, potentially, how they generate content that contests or undermines the supposed benefits of micro-living.

Micro-living is also important to consider in relation to how it is changing expectations of the ideal home. Similarly to the intensification of homeownership as an idealised form of homemaking through policies like the 1980s’ Right to Buy, we argue that micro-living promotes a specific form of housing in line with neoliberal concepts of housing as a predominantly financialised product. Rather than addressing the failure of neoliberalism to provide affordable housing, micro-living insists that solutions to housing crises exist *within* the privatised economy and “finds” these solutions by reimagining homes as smaller and denser. Micro-living also extends longstanding traditions of moralising home by rooting the socio-political value of residents to their housing tenure. Right to Buy encouraged the idea that homeownership is indicative of a person’s social value, while micro-living, as an idealised form of homemaking, is connected to different socio-political values, rooted in normative imaginaries of entrepreneurial, flexible, and creative urban sociality.

Finally, the acceleration of micro-living as a posited “solution” to the housing crisis provides a springboard for future enquiry across cultural, social, and economic geographies. For example, what are the implications of micro-living for the future demographics of inner cities, as housing stock becomes increasingly geared towards the young childless middle-classes? How will the shrinking of homespaces impact people’s wellbeing, sense of self and belonging? What is the role of social media in celebrating micro-living and other neoliberal narratives of success? What is the role of micro-living, and connectedly co-working, in the increased blurring of home–work spacetimes and the normalisation of precarious labour conditions? What is clear is that micro-living is undoubtedly reshaping the urban landscapes of major Western cities, as

well as the lifeworlds of an increasingly squeezed middle-class. As micro-living continues to be promoted and celebrated, it is essential we urgently interrogate its impacts and assess the impetuses driving it.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the ESRC, which funded part of the research informing this paper. We would also like to thank Professor Katherine Brickell for many conversations about the micro, which have been invaluable in developing many of the ideas in this paper. Thanks also to the reviewers for their time and feedback.

## DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

No new data were created.

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Examples of micro-living in this paper were identified from secondary research. They have been selected to reflect the breadth of micro-living as well as to illustrate key developers and stakeholders.

<sup>2</sup> Beds in shed' refers to sub-par illegal housing, usually in subdivided property, including garden sheds (Hodge, Jones & Allen 2018).

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**How to cite this article:** Harris E, Nowicki M. “GET SMALLER”? Emerging geographies of micro-living. *Area*. 2020;52:591–599. <https://doi.org/10.1111/area.12625>